

H A S S E L B L A D



**PRESS
PHOTOGRAPHY**

History

The question of who took the first news picture is the subject of controversy. When the Englishman, Roger Fenton, followed the British Army during the Crimean War in the middle of the 1850's, he must have been one of the first persons to do a real picture story, i.e. to follow and document a special event, using photography. He went out into the field with gear which, to our spoiled senses, must have been defective and bulky. Everything was packed into a wine merchant's covered wagon which also served as a darkroom and for the preparation of plates. It also held large containers for the all-important water, hay for the horses, a bed for the photographer etc. Things are a bit different today. Nowadays it's a question of honor to smuggle all your gear on board the plane as hand baggage.

At the end of the 1870's, the American newspaper the "New York Daily Graphic" took on the world's first, true press photographer. In March 1880, the same newspaper published the world's first photograph printed in a newspaper. In 1883 Georg Meisenbach, a German from Munich, took out a patent on the halftone plate, i.e. the art of forming a halftone image from a photograph on a zinc plate using an intermediate fine screen. And then suddenly the way was open for both the news picture and the news photographer. It had taken nearly 50 years before the photograph could be duplicated in newspapers and printed matter, 50 years from the time French authorities had presented Daguerre's patent to the world.

Rune Hassner, a top-flight Swedish press photographer, maker of films for TV, TV producer behind, for example, a unique TV series on the history of photography, and a really fine writer on photography, wrote the following in an article entitled "The Free Picture":

"The Danish liberal, Jacob Riis, also found that his revealing social activities with camera and pen in the slums of New York at the close of the 1880's were not regarded with unmixed joy by a group which felt its interests threatened. The 'difficult' Riis noted:

'We now know that there is no way out,

that private greed and the neglect of matters vital to the community have their root in a system which has come to stay, a storm center in our civilization for all time. There only remains the task of making the best of a poor thing. Someone must tell the facts. That is why I be- no more than that. I must confess that I came a reporter. I used photography — am a poor photographer.'

"With these poor pictures as a battering ram, Riis made the best of the situation. He succeeded in forcing through a clean-up of some of the worst slum areas. Room was made for parks and playgrounds. The Government put up housing. Summer camps were established for children. Jacob Riis Park is still there today. And there is still a Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement in Long Island City, a part of Queens, N.Y., as a fine monument to photography and, of course, to Jacob Riis.

"What Happened Next?"

"Photography is occasionally called an international language, a mighty maker of opinions, a visual power factor in our society. Every day, every week the press disseminates photos by the millions all over the world. Every day picture bureaus distribute tons of excellent picture stories to prospective buyers. Large photos are hung on walls in public places and in subways. It is impossible to avoid the photograph in our daily lives."

But when I read photo magazines and books, I occasionally get the feeling that not really very much has happened in press photography in the past few decades. Wide-angles have indeed become even wider and telephoto shots have become even more extreme. A few barriers have been razed but with the rather silly result that girls have lost their bras and photographers their senses.

The Pulitzer Prize winning Vietnam pictures by the Japanese UPI photographer, Kyoichi Sawada, are really fantastic in their realism, crying out in protest against war, no matter where or between whom. But this was true also of Robert Capa's pictures more than 30 years ago.

Sam Haskins is actually a fashion photog-



Photo: Björn Larsson

rapher who has become world famous for his four books "Five Girls", "Cowboy Kate", "African Image" and "November Girl". In an article in *Hasselblad* no. 4, December, 1969, he wrote:

"I am heartily sick of dreary photo reportages showing death and destruction — hunger, poverty and misery. I am heartily sick of snapshots soaked in pseudo social implications."

A few lines later he described i.a. the much more elegant, often humorous and intelligent social criticism practiced by painters.

The photographer made use of the instant when the girl was more interested in her companion than the camera to produce a relaxed, backlit portrait. Telephoto lens.

Cover photo: Erich Baumann

A relatively slow shutter speed and panned camera provide an impression of the runners' pattern of movement and the collective movement forward.



Photo: Anders Engman

UN troops on Cyprus in the chow line. The flag immediately tells you what the picture is about. Try to use such 'ready-made captions' when available. In this case the flag is a decorative picture element which brightens the otherwise subdued color scale. Normal lens, 80 mm f. 2.8 Planar.

"Yet this sort of frivolity is not for that multitude of sad-faced photographers — they are out to prove to the world what good people they are by trying to force their social consciences down our throats month after dreary month."

It seems as if war and misery have always provided the environment for really incisive photo-journalism.

I'm not really complaining about modern pictures but isn't it true that photography, despite faster films, motor-driven cameras and dazzling color films, has become a little

stagnant? Perhaps we just can't progress any further at the moment. Photography in the year 1970 is by no means perfect, and I'd really like to get a few tips from anybody who could revolutionize photographic thinking. Or do we first need some gigantic technical advance in order to juvenate photography radically?

Rune Hassner ended his article by saying:

"The extraordinary thing about our modern photo age is that Jacob Riis can still be reckoned as one of the very few photographers able to show any results from his efforts which are of value to the community."

What is Press Photography Really?

Occasionally, when I see myself and/or my colleagues on television, I suddenly wonder: Are we all crazy? Are the neighbors right in staring at us peculiarly? An example: Something happens in one corner of the TV screen. Two great men (men who control the fate of the world and who, according to a world-wide advertising campaign, always wear a certain watch which is made with the precision worthy of a Hasselblad) shake hands vigorously enough to loosen the pinstripes on their suits. In the other corner: a seething, howling pack of photographers popping off their strobes. Some people might ask: Does a photographer have to have a herd instinct? Does he have to take 100 shots when only one picture lands in the newspaper? My feeling is that he should try to avoid a herd mentality. But this is often easier said than done. Anyway, he should shoot, shoot, shoot until they have to carry him away. He should work like a vacuum cleaner and get as much material as possible. The task of looking for publishable pictures doesn't really begin until he gets back to the office and can show what he's got. My motto is: a hundred shots too many is better than one too few!

It's difficult to give you any direct advice on press photography. Most of what the experienced photographer does is instinctive. The press photographer's job, however strange it may sound to the layman, is a job requiring not only energy and stubbornness but planning as well, planning the pur-

chase of equipment, planning how to shoot a job etc. He needs a little luck too. Luck is that something extra you get sometimes but can't or shouldn't count on. Instead there is only one thing to do with a rapid course of events: shoot, shoot, shoot until your finger aches. As I said: a hundred shots too many is better than one too few!

One thing should be kept in mind if you're going to have any chance at all. Take your time, if you can! If you're shooting people, the subject is often (but not always, of course) favorably disposed to being photographed. Not because you happen to be the photographer but because your shot will be published in the newspaper or magazine you represent.

Photography's Primadonnas

Press photography has somehow developed into a stage for photographic primadonnas. News photography is the field where the chances of creating a name for yourself as a photographer are greatest. And a big name in our "free" trade, as in many others, means more than an occasional admiring glance. It also means a lot of money. And let's face it! Only a very, very few people work at or can work at getting a good picture without a thought to the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

Henri Cartier-Bresson (France), Cecil Beaton (England), Canada's Karsh of Ottawa, Philippe Halsman, Penn and Avedon (USA) and Lennart Nilsson (Sweden) are examples of names selected from a veritable sea of almost equally gifted, almost equally intelligent photographers. These men, plus a few others, are somewhat analogous to the former king of motor racing, Juan Manuel Fangio. Like Fangio they get through the "curves" with just a bit more speed than the rest of the pack. Note: I'm not condemning the "cult of personality" in photography but I advise photographers to watch out for it.

The Glamourless Days

When people speak of press photography they almost always have the "icing on the cake" in mind. Even if you shoot stories for LIFE, PARIS MATCH, STERN or just a simple local newspaper, you still run across

a lot of dull ordinary, glamourless days in the week. It becomes hard to find relatively fresh angles when the weeks are filled with rather insignificant interview portraits, weeks in which the only contrast is a welcome fussing with extension tubes to do some copying or close-ups.

But the really experienced and knowledgeable photographer shows his true colors in the midst of glamourless routine. It may be easier to travel to the other side of the world to take pictures, whose exotic nature alone is enough to guarantee sales, than to plod through the dreary weeks of February with rain and snow and slush.

When the Cream Turns Sour

The work of a press photographer can be frustrating indeed. Let me give you an example from a real situation. A certain revolution in a certain country! The world holds its breath. The event is covered in newspapers, magazines, radio and TV almost to the exclusion of everything else. The big and small picture magazines are packed with photos of freedom fighters in battle, at rest, sometimes joyful, and, gradually, in deep sorrow. After a few days of freedom for the people, the government in power, which was shaken for a time, puts a stop to that freedom. The old bonds are tightened once more. They were never really as loose as they had seemed a few days before.

And the news pictures, especially in exquisite photogravure, are put to good use by those who had suddenly and brutally reclaimed power. These photographs of freedom fighters in battle and at rest are suddenly converted into death warrants. Sadly enough, it is difficult to imagine anything handier than a newspaper clipping to use in identifying "trouble makers" and punishing them for their desire for freedom.

The question of the photographer's and, primarily, the newspaper's responsibility arises. The newspaper (or magazine) and photographer constantly walk a tightrope in trying to maintain 100% freedom for news pictures — freedom to depict events but not freedom from responsibility. A picture should be able to shock or entertain but not hurt or harm.

TV — Friend or Foe?

The rather fantastic progress of TV as a purveyor of pictures has led to radical changes in the working conditions of news photographers and made many old rules and professional tricks obsolete, making one thing certain. Not even the fastest evening newspaper in the world with a multitude of editions has any chance of competing with live TV. Thus, the news photographer in the field has to try and flee the TV cameras and "squeeze in behind" accidents, sporting events and the solemn marriages or funerals of great men and women so as to find an angle too difficult for bulky, conspicuous TV cameras.

But TV cameras for live transmission are getting smaller and handier all the time. In practice, competition between the TV picture and the press picture is getting even more intense. What can the press photographer do to meet the challenge of TV in some more or less honest manner? One is occasionally tempted to believe that picture quality is not enough. Ordinary people are usually not interested enough to notice the difference anyway. And TV news photographers, who are often recruited from the ranks of better press photographers, are getting abler every year. You could also put it this way: The events covered by TV increase interest and even pave the way for the stills which turn up in newspapers and magazines a day or week later.

Choosing Gear

The photographic profession really only has a few common denominators. The will to take good pictures and the choice of gear (with certain variations) are often common features. There are really only a few first-class camera systems around.

The Hasselblad has the finest all-round camera system. There are occasions when other first-rate makes might be more appropriate, but there is no other system, no matter what the negative size, which covers as many different kinds of photographic applications. Astronaut or school photographer! The Hasselblad can handle the job.

And results with the $2\frac{1}{4}'' \times 2\frac{1}{4}''$ negative size are often better than with a stamped 35 mm.



Photo: George Holton

It is somewhat more expensive to shoot $2\frac{1}{4}'' \times 2\frac{1}{4}''$, but you end up far ahead anyway since it is far easier to sell $2\frac{1}{4}'' \times 2\frac{1}{4}''$ color to the world press. And a news photographer's pictures are supposed to wind up in print.

A lot of careful thinking should precede each purchase, I feel, even of the smallest accessory. Gadgets purchased on the spur of the moment display a remarkable ability to collect dust without ever being put into use and are among the least profitable investments you can make. In the lists below,

Nepal. Tibetan refugees getting food. The outstretched hands and arms draw attention to the lower corner and focus interest on one thing—the food. The Hasselblad's square format is a real asset here. Blow-ups can easily be made of the most interesting part of your negative.

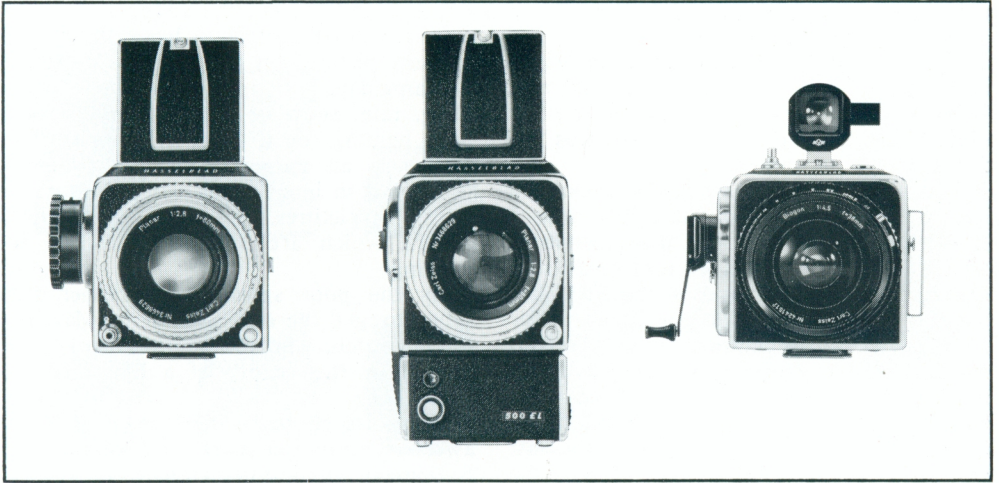


Photo: Rolf Clipper

Hasselblad pictures from all over the world. Here we have a marketplace somewhere in Eastern India. It's comforting to know that there are 69 service centers all over the world. Some climates wear out a camera more than others and even a Hasselblad needs service and adjustment occasionally.

I did my best to compose a few sets of "basic equipment". Let me emphasize that these are my own ideas about basic equipment, derived from my experience as a press photographer with assignments all over the world. The gear can be supplemented as required. The Hasselblad system has a truly comprehensive range of accessories.

The problem with basic equipment is to weigh the costs against the prospective use. I believe that the Hasselblad choice is versatile enough for anyone doing press photography.



Proposal 1: Limited Basic Equipment

- 1 Hasselblad 500C camera body.
- 2 magazines A12 for color and B & W (the quick interchangeability of magazines is one of Hasselblad's big advantages).
- 1 Zeiss Planar f. 2.8/80 mm lens.

Extra Lenses:

- Zeiss Distagon f. 4/40 mm.
- Zeiss Sonnar f. 4/150 mm (I personally feel the 150 mm lens is more important to have around than the 40 mm lens).
- Lens shades for all lenses.
- Sports viewfinder, if required.
- Knob with exposure meter.

Case 518, which is robust, roomy and rather discrete.

A pack of magazine slides. Slides display a remarkable tendency to "disappear" just when the photographer is in a rush to change magazines.

An inexpensive UV filter kept on the lens guards against blue haze in color pictures by absorbing ultraviolet rays. It also protects the front element from unwelcome scratches.

When the time comes to supplement this basic equipment, one could be stricken by some buying mania. Equipment can be extended almost without limit without satisfying the needs and working methods of all photographers. Advising on accessories is

tricky. For a long while I thought the quick-focusing handle was a superfluous accessory. But I gradually came to appreciate it and would not like to be without it today.

If a press photographer has the equipment listed below, he should be equipped to handle anything from fast-moving street scenes to portraits, fashion, industry, sports and lunar pictures (if he ever got himself on a space flight). It will be a while before the moon surface is the common man's photographic battleground. But one thing is sure. Hasselblad's construction and system will last until then.

Proposal 2: Extended Basic Equipment

- 2 500C camera bodies or 1 500C and 1 500EL
- 4 magazines A12
- 1 Zeiss Distagon f. 4/40 mm lens
- 1 Zeiss Planar f. 2.8/80 mm lens
- 1 Zeiss Sonnar f. 4/150 mm lens
- 1 Zeiss Sonnar f. 5.6/250 mm lens
- A pile of magazine slides
- Lens shades and UV filters for all lenses
- Extension tube 21 or 55
- Sports viewfinder
- Frame viewfinder 150/250
- 2 quick-focusing handles.

Personally, I think the model 612 aluminum case is an exceptional carrying case. Inside this case the equipment, which is pretty ex-

pensive by now, is extremely well-protected against bumps and moisture.

The Hasselblad SWC has not yet come into its own as a press camera and the 40 mm Zeiss Distagon could conceivably be replaced by a SWC if a greater need was felt for this type of camera.

It is difficult to offer any advice about the choice between the Hasselblad SWC with a f. 4.5/38 mm Biogon and the Hasselblad 500C (or 500EL) with a 40 mm or 50 mm Distagon. For news purposes, the SWC has many of the advantages put forward for 35 mm cameras. In contrast to the 500C and 500EL, there is no ground glass screen on the SWC but an optical viewfinder; the lens is permanently attached to the SWC body. The Hasselblad SWC is, thus, fast and easy to use. On the other hand, the 500EL with a 40 mm Distagon has an automatic film transport which gives you a much faster operating speed, but this camera is undeniably heavier and bulkier than the SWC. If, on the 500EL's ground glass screen, you can check the distortion you may get with wide-angle lenses, this problem need not trouble you, if the Hasselblad spirit level, which is attached to the accessory shoe, is used.

The third wide-angle lens, the 50 mm Distagon, also has a smaller angle of view (75° as compared to 88° for the 40 mm Distagon and 90° for the SWC). But it is much smaller, lighter and easier to use.

Sports Photography

Some quotations from an article on sports photography by Erich Baumann, one of Germany's most successful sports photographers:

"The laws of sports photography are determined i.a. by:

- the rapid course of events
- difficult lighting conditions
- topicality
- the demand to capture a unique moment
- high picture quality.

"Newspapers and sports magazines are published at a feverish pace. This imposes severe demands on the sports photographer.

"A sporting event often takes place far from the newspaper's offices. A game may have

begun at 3 P.M. but the editor-in-chief demands without a blink to have the photographer's pictures on his desk by 5:15 P.M. the same day.

"Fog, rain, snow or a game played under poor lighting (or if flash pictures are forbidden in an indoor event) are problems which fail to interest the picture editor. He wants his pictures, exciting ones, attention-getters, which are easy to reproduce for printing.

"Pity the poor sports photographer who failed to 'get' the only goal of the day in a soccer match, who missed the knockout in a fight or the victory of a longshot in a horse race.

"The sports photographer's most important asset is unusually fast reflexes plus camera equipment suited to them. He should be able to predict the photographic high-point of an event and adapt himself lightning-fast to unforeseen circumstances.

"The assertion by journalists that the photographer doesn't have to think, just press the shutter release at the right moment, is obviously inaccurate. Before every sporting event you have to try and think of how to get original and unconventional pictures. You have to choose lenses with appropriate focal lengths, get yourself in the right position, have the right film loaded and have the right shutter speed, f/stop and focusing distance all set in advance. Even so, you could get into a fix.

"At a harness racing event in Iffezheim, a horse was crowded against the rail just as I was in the process of changing from a telephoto to a wide-angle lens. I regained consciousness in a hospital's casualty ward. They were in the process of sewing up a severe gash in my head. I asked the doctor to hurry. I had to get back to the track. The doctor told the nurse that since I was obviously quite mad, 14 days or so of rest to heal a brain concussion would hardly matter. In fact, I had to sign a paper saying I was leaving the hospital at my own risk. I was actually back in place by the fifth race!

"What kind of equipment does a sports photographer use in his work? I have several set-ups, including a Hasselblad 500C, of course, a SWC and a 500EL. I have 80 mm, 250 mm and 500 mm lenses with cor-

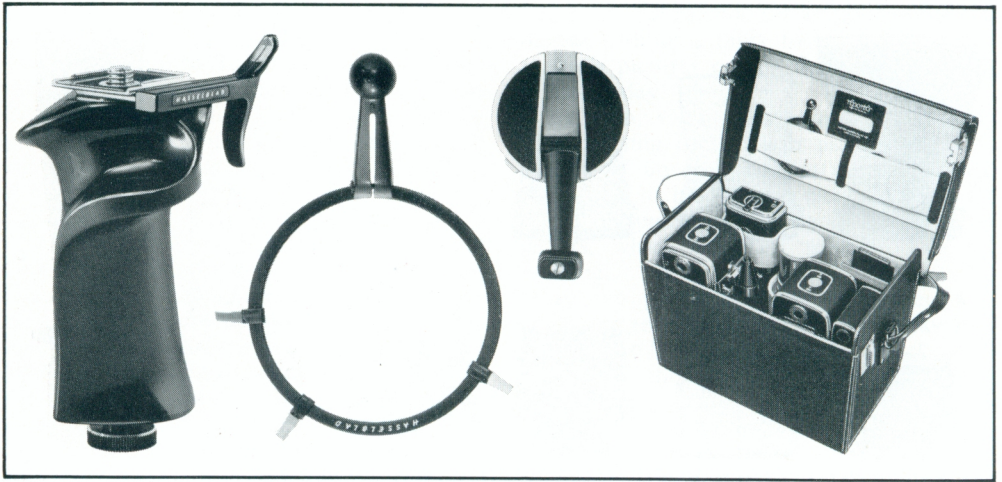


responding accessories, various viewfinders, magazines etc." Baumann also said: "My experiences with the 500C and motor-driven 500EL have been good. The ability to operate the camera from a radio transmitter is really wonderful. I almost never miss a goal in soccer. My sales quickly paid for the 500EL."

I agree with Baumann. The 500EL with a magazine 70 does make sports and news photography much easier in general. The Hasselblad 500EL is a camera with an almost perfect fast film advance mechanism,

even if some 35 mm cameras are faster. Getting 12 exposures in 11 seconds with the Hasselblad 500EL and magazine A12 or more than 70 in 60 seconds with a magazine 70 provides an almost reckless feeling of never being able to miss a shot. The art of missing shots, however, is something no camera in the world can cope with.

The Hasselblad 500EL/70 is, thus, able to do a lot of things traditional cameras are unable to do. It can be triggered in a number of different ways: manually on the camera itself or with the help of a cord



up to 200 m long, by radio from miles away or with a timer for exposure at a special time or at regular intervals from 2 sec. up to 60 hours.

Who needs such an advanced camera? One could say that all big users who want to facilitate routine work need a Hasselblad 500EL/70, and especially the press photographer. He could then forget about irritating, time-consuming routine work and devote more time to the picture.

Flash Photography

All lenses in the Hasselblad system are fully synchronized for flash from 1—1/500 sec., in contrast to many other 2¼"×2¼" single-lens reflex cameras which generally have focal plane shutters and, accordingly, flash synchronization only at certain shutter speeds. The first Hasselblads, the 1600F and 1000F, had focal plane shutters and the flash synchronization problems of such shutters. The shortest exposure with reliable synchronization was 1/30 sec., a speed which occasionally presented insurmountable problems for a photographer. This was especially true with fill-in flash with strong back lighting with a view to future pictures via photo-telegaphy.

I know it looks almost ridiculous for a photographer to use flash in sunlight. But there are occasions when it really is nec-

essary and not only when pictures are to be transmitted to clients with photo-telegaphy. Flash photography in sunlight can be recommended but there must be a careful balance between the background's daylight and the flash unit's distance to the subject, particularly with color film.

Thus, you need a camera with a between-the-lens shutter, since synchronization is then available at all shutter speeds. Let's take an example in which flash is to be used on a subject which, without flash, requires an exposure of 1/250 sec. at f/8. If you use a Hasselblad 500C or 500EL you need only have the flash at a distance from the subject which would provide a flash exposure corresponding to f/8 at 1/250 sec. No problems. Just remember you may need an extra-long connecting cord between the camera and the flash unit. The focal plane shutter would present a problem. There you have to use 1/60 sec. With such a long shutter speed f/16 must be used, providing increased depth-of-field which could spoil the picture. "Ghost" images could also be obtained here if the subject should move at all. A flash gun can be of invaluable assistance with difficult color pictures.

Service — Wet and Dry

When you select camera equipment, you don't do so with a view to what happens

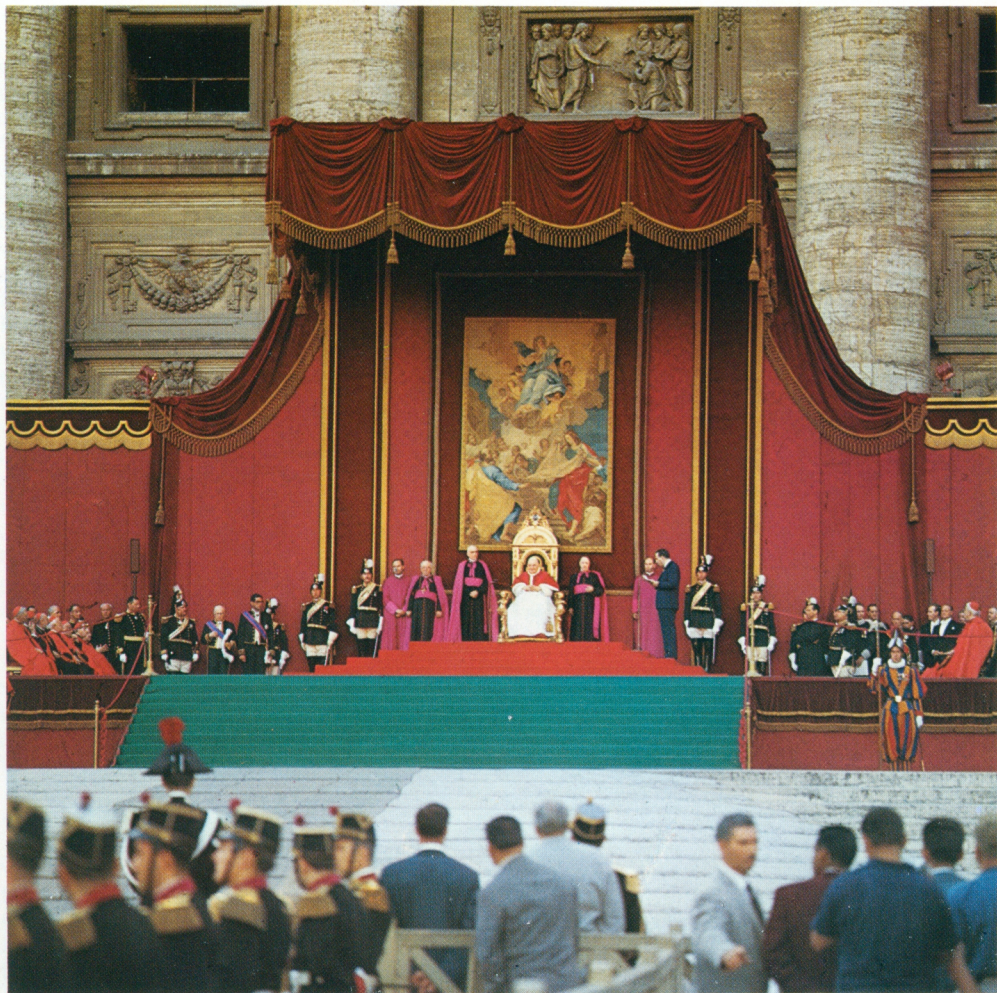


Photo: Anders Engman

when it breaks down. But perhaps one should. Oh, it's fine to dream about the results the gear, in collaboration with your own eminent photographic eye, will produce. But if you've ever sat in a hotel room with a camera about as perky as a car without an engine, you'll give up dreaming. It's nice to have a repair shop just around the corner, so to speak. There are makers of cars which boast about being able to offer service in just about any country village. This is not true of cameras.

I feel no need to claim that Hasselblads

The former Pope, John XXIII, at a religious ceremony in Rome. The photographer is often relegated to a place far away from the center of things. The 250 mm f. 5.6 Sonnar can be hand-held at fast shutter speeds. Razor sharpness and high contrast even when wide open make for excellent enlargements.



Photo: Jens Karlsson

Design, color drama! The silhouettes of firemen lend firmness to the picture and the blackness increases the luminosity of the colors in the background. Despite its generous film size, the Hasselblad is a small, easy-to-use, durable and dependable camera, a tool for the demanding photo-journalist.

never break down. There are weak points in any complicated construction. But the existence of 69 franchised service and repair shops all over the world is really something to boast about. At big events (e.g. world championships, the Olympics etc.) attended by droves of photographers, a temporary repair shop is often set up at the site or existing facilities are reinforced.

In general it is safe to say that both camera and film can take extremes of heat, cold, moisture and drought better than the photographer.

But dust and moisture are serious problems if you neglect them. Try to dust and dry off equipment as quickly as possible after use. Dust and rain together can, if worst comes to worst, make the whole camera “freeze up”. High relative humidity can also lead to the growth of mold, i.e. fungus on lens elements or other types on the camera body etc. The no. 612 metal case, which is otherwise just a carrying case to me, can really justify its use under such difficult conditions.

However, I don't want to frighten anyone who leaves his ordinary surroundings to travel to places with extreme climatic conditions. In fact you seldom hear of colleagues who actually had film or equipment damaged by climate even in the most miserable of circumstances. Equipment usually works well and provides good results, technically speaking anyway.

One little tip from Hasselblad's service department: If a camera should, for example, fall in the water so that it gets really wet all through, try to get it to a repair shop in a sturdy plastic bag with a little fresh water supply in it. If you let the camera dry, especially if it has been in salt water, it's almost impossible for a repairman to clean it and get it into operation again.

A Little Service Tale

This little tale, picked up in conjunction with a visit to a franchised Hasselblad repair shop, proves that modern photographers, especially the young ones, are really “with it” in respect to hair length and fashion trends such as “Flower Power”.

The phone rings, and a fashionable young photographer inquires about a sickly Hasselblad previously turned in for service. “What's the number”, asked the repairman, for the shelf was full of cameras longing for their owners. “No idea”, the young man answered, “but it's got FLOWERS on it.”

Details and the Whole Picture

My life, like the life of many other photographers, mainly consists of taking my own pictures and looking at other people's, not least in order to improve my own. Occasionally, I note that pros often take far too many close-ups. This is not absolutely

wrong but becomes doubtful if depiction of the environment suffers. Photographers depend on the impact of the close-up, but seem to forget that pictures without their captions often could have been taken just around the corner. Recent events in Biafra have almost been forgotten. This is a shocking example of what the 20th Century has to offer. But this is also an example showing the validity of what I've said about close-ups and milieu shots. Hundreds of thousands of stills and miles of TV film were taken. Stills were dominated by close-ups of children's faces “on the verge of death”, shattering pictures in themselves. But there were few equally shattering pictures showing the surroundings. And the results were photographically excellent close-ups, often at the expense of the surroundings, i.e. pictures which *should* have been taken with wide-angle or normal lenses.

On the other hand, amateurs take far too few close-ups. Attempts are made to capture too much background or to take pictures too far from the subject itself. A record in this category must be held by a certain English gentleman. And the story is true, I assure you. He was to photograph his wife and two well-combed children as a group leaning against an idyllic medieval church in a charming little Spanish village. The big problem was to get in both the church steeple and the family. He focused, glared into the viewfinder, backed and focused, glared and focused. And in his meandering he passed over a railway crossing, unwittingly. Everything was fine. The family, hardened by previous photographic exercises, held their pose patiently, even if their smiles gradually began to “droop” a little. A bell began to ring. The barrier descended and an infinitely long freight train chugged past between family with church steeple and the photographer, all this occurring to the cries of a delighted group of spectators.

So play it cool. Shift between close-ups and medium shots and change lenses if you have more than one. If you're a pro, try to force picture editors to realize that all picture requirements cannot be satisfied by tidy portraits. And you amateurs, let me warn you about church steeples and family in the same

picture (the family holding up the tower). Leave the steeple alone but move the family to within a few yards from the camera. Then the church steeple will become a useful part of the background.

Black & White or Color

Is the B & W picture doomed to extinction? Statistics from all over the world show that the use of color film (negative and positive) is growing almost explosively — at the expense of B & W. As I put the question, the answer would have to be a ringing “no”, even if color is likely to dominate in the future. Let me briefly explain my defence of B & W. The B & W picture provides the advanced worker with a great many opportunities within the range of the gray scale, from the whitest of whites to coal black, for the interpretation of his intentions, no matter what colors our eyes see. But the world’s daily newspapers, the greatest consumer of press photographs, are far from being ready to print their news pictures in color or those “fast pictures” readers demand to see as soon as an event happens. Modern B & W film is also very fast and provides daily newspapers with technically acceptable results even when exposures were made under very difficult lighting conditions. The camera and film industry have worked hand in hand to achieve this. High temperature processing, wetprinting etc. are still beyond the reach of modern color films. The advance of color is probably the most important photographic event in recent years. I happen to love-hate color photography. And “mixed” assignments requiring both B & W and color are often a real nightmare. You get split. Technical matters as simple in themselves as, e.g. exposure, suddenly have to be thought out all over again. The exposure meter has to be checked carefully and color temperature may also have to be measured occasionally. And that costs pictures! I don’t wish to suggest I’m out there thinking when shooting “fast moving” events. At such times I work like a kind of robot, taking a step to the right or left or backwards or forwards. The picture will suddenly “feel” better, thanks to a little judicious wandering, thanks to a few steps in one direction or another.

This is something for both amateurs and pros. The first angle is not always the best one. Keep looking for new angles and shoot and shoot. If I’m at home or in a bar somewhere, a little part of my subconscious is still in there working away on pictures. I can’t stop myself thinking: “If he/she/it would only move a little I could get a better shot. The light from the window/lamp/fireplace would be much better.” Funny, you can’t stop thinking that way, even against your own will — and even if your camera is in the glove compartment of your car, in another room or back at the office. A psychiatrist could probably explain it by digging out some frightening experience from my youth. I just call it a touch of some mysterious occupational disease, an occupational disease which even may be useful to a photographer.

Filing

Offering good advice about anything as trivial as filing e.g. B & W negatives is almost harder than taking it. However, this is not always a problem for photographers working for clients using intaglio. Too often the negative gets mislaid in the course of the intaglio process or is damaged too much to justify a place in the negative file.

Seriously though, I feel it is the photographer’s absolute responsibility to be able to find a negative to a certain picture several years after exposure. This may be easier said than done. But aside from the fact that this should be an obvious service to i.a. clients, I don’t have to point out that this, in favorable circumstances, may be the source of unexpected and gratifying income for the photographer.

“Write” the Family History

In my opinion, press photography covers everything from the incredible lunar pictures taken by astronauts to the flood of pictures from the mass media, pictures of war, misery, hunger and prosperity, and to the pictures taken of anonymous families on Sunday picnics. Space pictures are history as well as the mass media’s flood of pictures. For right in the middle of this mighty stream you will find pictures with a value which,



Photo: Erich Baumann

in my opinion, not even the best of oil paintings can compete with. The pictures from a Sunday picnic are family history, and I don't think I'm wrong when I regard all kinds of pictures as being equally important. And so I look on both astronauts and Sunday strollers as press photographers of a kind, important ones at that, the strollers not the least. If the Sunday stroller would only take pictures more seriously or consciously in his daily environment (not merely in the home with the baby in the bath tub), his pictures would be a big help to

A picture which is more than a snapshot for the sports page! Using a telephoto lens the photographer has been able to get closer to the man behind the wheel and enable us to discover details otherwise invisible to the naked eye. Rain drops on the helmet and car suggest dismal weather which often provides color shots with great brilliance and character.



Photo: Ronny Karlsson

Flash, wide-angle, the camera mounted in the goal. A job for a Hasselblad 500EL and 40 mm f. 4 Distagon. Exposure by cable or radio.

Back Page. Photo: Erich Baumann

The start of a Formula 1 race at the Nürburgring. The telephoto lens compresses perspective and increases the drama around the tightly packed cars.

future scientists interested in how the small creeping things of the 20th Century really lived behind their Venetian blinds.

A Creative Piece of Clay

I don't think one could speak or write 10 words in a row about photography without feeling inclined to quote something from one of the three books by the world-famous LIFE photographer, Andreas Feininger, "Successful Photography", "Creative Photographer" or "Successful Color Photography". Here is Feininger's opinion:

— In itself the camera is no more creative than a piece of clay but like the latter it becomes a medium of artistic expression in inspired hands. There are no special ‘cameras to win prizes with’. There are only photographers who win prizes . . .

— Technique is valuable only as long as it can be used for practical purposes. The exposure meter is as self-evident as the film in the camera. The press photographer’s alpha and omega are *Impact*, *Honesty* and *Drama*.

In my years of travel I’ve hitherto followed the principle of not beating down doors but trying to talk my way in instead. Still, new blossoms sprout eternally in bureaucracy’s jungle. In some places you never stop explaining why you are taking a picture of this or that on some street or in a square. If I had given way to pressure, I’d probably have a rather fantastic collection of pictures today from nearly 90 countries — pictures of statues of great men, shots of old but wellscrubbed monuments and/or charming, nicely-dressed children. To some extent, these conditions are the unfortunate result of years of rather dishonest international photo-journalism practiced by colleagues from near and far who are skillful enough but who have no “conscience”.

There is an inherent suspicion of foreigners in many places, but the suspicion of foreigners with cameras is just about universal. Books could be written about a press photographer’s relations with strangers. Without getting in too deeply, I’ll just point out that nothing draws more public applause than the sight of a photographer falling on his rear end, dropping his camera in the water or ending up with a 225 lb. fullback on his lap. Sometimes when you burden your proud neck with 3—4 camera bodies with different lenses and films, you get your share of wisecracks from the public. I suppose you do look like some kind of mobile Christmas tree, but there is more to the tale. It’s that old devil “mixed” color and B & W. Even if it’s pretty easy to change Hasselblad magazines (despite the dark slide’s incredible ability to “disappear” just when you need it), several camera bodies present the simplest (if not the cheapest) solution. It takes time, not a lot but some-

times too much, to change lenses or magazines. Clever film speed markings are fine but a handy piece of tape upon which film and speed are clearly marked is still the safest bet. Nowadays you can also stick a piece of the film box in a slot on the back of the new Hasselblad magazine.

Without a doubt the work of a press photographer is a real battleground for people with “go” — if you look at it positively — and for those with a smooth, well-oiled tongue and sharp elbows — if you want to be a little more critical (or realistic).

A real live prince somewhere in Europe, often photographed but not always from the best angle, remarked on one occasion (admittedly long before the TV age but still worthy of a quote):

“A country without press photographers would be a country without eyes or contact with the present.”

Sure, a great many rather meaningless press photographs are taken, almost clown pictures of statesmen getting along nicely at no. 2 hole on a golf course (England), lifting dogs by the ears (USA), sweeping a huge tankard of foaming beer close by the front of a grateful photographer’s camera in a display of manliness (Germany) or rowing about in a leaky old rowboat (Sweden). The record is probably held by a Swedish local government official who, in front of a pack of press photographers, brushed his teeth in freshly discharged, purified effluent to prove the fantastic efficiency of a new sewage disposal plant.

Many learned men over the years have expressed opinions on press photography, its future and even its right to exist. As an industrial aid and even as a press picture it has surpassed the wildest of dreams and fears. It has never been accepted as an art form. Personally, I don’t feel there is any need to try to elevate photography to the heights of one of the noble arts. Photography will manage fine in its own right.

A great deal has been said but one thing is certain: Opportunity knocks once! A remark made about 20 years ago by a tired Swedish photographer after having stood in the snow and waited for hours, sums it up:

“Opportunity comes in like a snail but goes out in a flash!”

H A S S E L B L A D



Photo: Erich Baumann

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